

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES**



<b>POLICY</b>	
Department on Disability Services	Subject: Duty Officer
Responsible Program or Office: Developmental Disabilities Administration	Policy Number: 2015-DDA-POL27
Date of Approval by the Director: December 24, 2015	Number of Pages: 3
Effective Date: December 24, 2015	Expiration Date, if any: N/A
Supersedes Policy Dated: August 1, 2003 MRDDA Rapid Response Officer	
Cross References, Related Policies and Procedures, and Related Documents: Incident Management and Enforcement Unit Policy; Incident Management and Enforcement Policy	

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Developmental Disabilities Administration (“DDA”) has a system to ensure that staff are available to advise, guide and support people who receive services from DDA and their support teams during an “emergency” (defined below) that may occur outside of regular DDA business hours; and that people who receive services from DDA and their support teams are aware of how to request afterhours assistance.

**2. APPLICABILITY**

The policy applies to all DDA Management Supervisory Services (“MSS”) Employees (Grade MS-12 and above), designated by the DDS Director based on employees’ job classification, experience, clinical knowledge, and training, as well as knowledge of government agencies and providers/vendors who provide services to people receiving supports from DDA’s service delivery system.

**3. AUTHORITY**

The authority for this policy for this policy is established in the DDS as set forth in D.C. Law 16-264, the “Department on Disability Services Establishment Act of 2006,” effective March 14, 2007 (D.C. Official Code § 7-761.01 et seq.); and D.C. Law 2-137, the “Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Constitutional Rights and

Dignity Act of 1978,” effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Official Code §7-1301.01 et seq.).

#### **4. RESPONSIBILITY**

The responsibility for this policy is vested in DDS’ Director; its implementation is the responsibility of the Deputy Director, DDA.

#### **5. POLICY**

It is the policy of DDS to provide continuous supervisory coverage for emergency situations and natural and/or national disasters that may occur during non-duty hours for all people who receive services and supports as part of DDA’s service delivery system, as well as to provide afterhours advice, guidance, and support to DDA staff, vendors/providers, family/community members, and other government entities, as needed.

#### **6. STANDARDS**

- A. DDS shall establish and maintain a duty office system, including but not limited to enacting procedures for how the Duty Officer system will be staffed, officer tours of duty, officer compensation, officer orientation and expectations including incident reporting and other documentation requirements. Through the Duty Officer system, DDA supervisory staff shall be available 24 hours per day, seven days per week to assist with any emergency situations that may affect people who receive supports from DDA’s service delivery system; and to advise, guide, and support DDA staff, service providers, and family members, and other members of the public.
- B. The Duty Officer’s primary responsibility is to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the people involved.
- C. All members of the Duty Officer Roster shall receive training and orientation before serving as a Duty Officer.
- D. DDS shall designate a Department coordinator for D.C. government agencies.
- E. On at least an annual basis, DDA shall provide information on the Duty Officer system to everyone who receives services and their support teams.
- F. DDS shall post the after-hours telephone number on its website.

#### **7. DEFINITIONS**

**Emergency** – Any issue, whether person – or provider related, that requires or may require the immediate assistance or intervention of DDA staff. Such issues include, but are not limited to, serious behavioral episodes; medical crises; serious and/ or imminent

physical or psychological danger; any issues adversely affecting a person's health, wellbeing or care; danger or displacement caused by fires, utility outages, or flood; and staff shortages.



Laura L. Nuss, Director



Date

